## A Guide to In-Home/Relative Child Care



Inside you will find answers to questions often asked by parents and guardians about Working Connections Child Care, a DSHS child care subsidy program.



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### How can this booklet help you?

This booklet answers the following important questions about DSHS child care. It is written to help parents and guardians find and keep child care.

- What are child care subsidies?
- What are copayments?
- What are your rights and responsibilities as a WCCC consumer?
- How do you choose quality caregivers?
- What if you want child care by a relative?
- What if you want child care by someone who is not a relative?
- How are caregivers paid?
- What kind of records must you keep?
- What do you do when you have child care subsidy problems?

### WHAT ARE CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES?

Child care subsidies are payments to help families pay for child care. The public funds for child care subsidies come from state and federal sources.

To receive these child care subsidies, you must be working or in an activity approved by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). You need to meet income as well as other eligibility guidelines. To find out if you can receive help with your child care costs, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

You can find the local office that serves you by calling 1-877-980-9131, or apply on-line at wws2.wa.gov/dshs/onlinecso.

You want to know that while you are in school or at work, your child is in safe, nurturing and enriching care.



### WHAT ARE COPAYMENTS?

Most child care subsidy programs require that families pay part of the child care costs. The amount you pay is called a "copayment." The Social Service Notice and the Award/Change letter tell how much your co-payment is each month. You must pay this amount directly to your caregiver each month. Pay your caregiver on time. You may lose child care benefits if you do not pay the copayment. Have the caregiver write you a receipt for all child care payments. Keep your receipts for one year, in case DSHS asks for them.

## What are your responsibilities as a WCCC consumer?

- Supply DSHS with accurate information to determine your eligibility and authorize child care payments correctly;
- Choose a provider who meets the needs of your family and the requirements of WAC 388-290-0125:
- Leave the child in care only for approved activities. DSHS will not pay for the child care for other reasons.
- Notify WCCC staff, within five days, of any change in providers.
- Notify your provider within ten days when we change your child care authorization.
- Report within ten days other changes to the DSHS authorizing worker, such as changes in:
  - > Household size:
  - > Parent/Guardian address;
  - > Provider's address or phone number;
  - > Household income;
  - > Your legal obligation to pay child support;
  - > Employment or training activities; or
  - > Hours of care needed.
- Failure to report changes in eligibility within ten days may result in suspension or termination of payment. You may also be billed for what DSHS paid when you were not eligible.
- Pay, or make arrangements to have someone pay, your WCCC copayment

directly to your child care provider. Obtain a receipt for payment. Failure to pay your copayment will result in the loss of your benefits.

- Keep attendance records for one year. Provide them to DSHS as requested.
- Pay your in-home/relative provider the entire amount the department sends you for in-home/relative child care.
- Require the in-home/relative caregiver sign a receipt when you pay the provider. You must keep the receipts for one year for DSHS to review on request.
- Report to your child care authorizing worker, within twenty-four hours, any pending charges or conviction information you learn about your caregiver.
- Report any individual 16 years of age or older that is newly residing with the in-home/relative provider when care occurs outside of the child's home.

## What are your rights as a WCCC consumer?

### Your rights for WCCC are to:

- Be treated politely and fairly without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, national origin, religion, age, gender, disability, or birthplace;
- Have an application accepted and acted upon within thirty days;
- Be informed, in writing, of your legal rights and responsibilities related to WCCC benefits;
- Only have your information shared with other agencies when required by federal or state regulations;
- Get a written notice, at least ten days before the department makes changes to lower or stop benefits except in WAC 388-290-0120;
- Ask for a fair hearing if you do not agree with the department about a decision by writing to Office of Administrative Hearings, PO box 42489, Olympia, WA 98504–2488.
- Ask a supervisor or administrator to review a decision or action affecting your benefits without affecting the right to a fair hearing;

- Have interpreter or translator services within a reasonable amount of time and at no cost to you.
- Be allowed to choose your provider as long as the provider meets the requirements in WAC 388-290-0125; and
- Report any health and safety concerns about your child care provider, by calling 1-800-562-5624;
- Refuse to speak to a fraud early detection (FRED) investigator from the
  division of fraud investigations. You do not have to let an investigator into
  your home. You may ask the investigator to come back at another time.
  This request will not affect your eligibility for benefits.

# WHAT ARE WCCC PROGRAM STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES?

#### The WCCC program staff are responsible to:

- Allow you to choose your provider as long as they meet the requirements in WAC 388-290-0125.
- Inform you of:
  - > Your rights and responsibilities under the WCCC program at the time of application and eligibility review;
  - > The types of child care providers who can be paid;
  - > The community resources that can help you select child care, when needed: and
  - > Any change in your copayment during the authorization period except under WAC 388-290-0120(4).
- Review your chosen in-home/relative provider's background information, and background information of certain individuals who live with the relative when care occurs outside of the child's home.
- Respond to you within ten days if you report a change of circumstances which affects your WCCC eligibility or copayment.
- Authorize payments only when caregivers allow you to see your children whenever they are in care;
- Only authorize payment when no adult in your WCCC family is "able or available" to care for your children (under WAC 388-290-0020).
- Provide prompt payments to your child care provider.

# WHAT ARE YOUR CAREGIVER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

#### The CAREGIVER has the following rights and responsibilities:

- Provide high quality child care.
- Keep records of actual hours of child care provided each month for one year.
- Review actual hours of child care claimed. Sign the invoice along with the parent/guardian each month if the invoice is mailed.
- Provide constant supervision for children in care.
- Provide care in the child's home. The caregiver may provide care in their own home if they are related to the child as listed on page 8.
- DSHS does not get involved in payment disagreements between the parent and the caregiver.
- To receive payment from the parent for child care services that are provided.
- To report to the parent any criminal arrests or convictions for the caregiver.
- To report to the parent any criminal arrests or convictions of anyone in the household 16 years of age or older when care occurs outside of the child's home.



## How do you choose a good caregiver for your child?

Families choose their child care from licensed or certified centers, family homes or in-home/relative care. In-home/relative care is:

- · Care in your own home by a relative or non-relative; or
- Care by certain relatives in their home.

You might prefer one type of child care setting over another. Think about what is best for you and your child. Look at all the options. Remember, your child's health, happiness, and safety is important. Take the time to find child care that meets your needs and the needs of your child.

**Child Care Resource and Referral** agencies are available throughout the state to help you find licensed or certified child care that meets your needs. To locate the Child Care Resource and Referral agency in your area, call **1-800-446-1114.** 

DSHS has a booklet to help you make the best decision for you and your child. This publication is entitled Choosing Child Care, A Consumer Guide for Parents, DSHS 22-516(X). Ask a child care authorizing worker at DSHS or your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency for a copy.

## WHAT TYPES OF CHILD CARE DOES DSHS PAY FOR?

#### DSHS can help pay for these types of child care:

- Licensed or certified child care centers;
- Licensed or certified family child care homes;
- Homes or centers licensed or certified by tribes or the Federal Department of Defense;
- Seasonal day camps that are contracted with DSHS;
- Certain relatives who provide care in their own homes. This is called <u>in-home/relative child care.</u>; and
- Certain adults who come to your home to provide care. This is called in-home/relative child care.

This booklet will explain more about in-home/relative child care.

## WHAT IF YOU WANT CARE BY AN IN-HOME RELATIVE CAREGIVER?

Child care provided in the child's home or by a relative in the relative's home does not have to be licensed for you to receive child care subsidies. Your caregiver cannot be the child's biological, step, or adoptive parent, legal guardian, in loco parents or the spouse of any of these individuals. WCCC may pay an adult sister or brother who lives outside the child's home.

### In-home/relative caregivers must:

- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Provide care only in the child's home. (Care may be provided in the relative's home if the relative is one of the following to the children); aunt, uncle, grandparent, sibling living outside the home, or a great aunt, uncle or grandparent;
- Not have a disqualifying criminal background under WAC 388-290-0160;\*
- Be of suitable character and competence;
- Be of sufficient physical and mental health to meet the needs of the child in care. If requested by the department, the parent(s) must provide written evidence that the caregiver of the parent's choice is of sufficient physical and mental health to be a safe child care provider;
- Be a U.S. citizen or an alien legally able to work in the U.S.;
- Be able to work with the child without using corporal punishment or psychologial abuse;
- Be able to accept and follow instruction;
- Be able to maintain personal cleanliness;
- Be prompt and regular in job attendance;
- Have a safe home for the care of the child;
- Be informed about basic health practices, prevention and control of infectious disease, immunizations, and home and physical premises safety relevant to the care of the child:
- Provide constant care and supervision of the child throughout the arranged time of care in accordance with the needs of the child;
- · Provide developmentally appropriate activities for the child; and

- Immediately report, to the parent, any notice of criminal convictions or pending charges against the caregiver.
- Immediately report, to the parent, any notice of criminal convictions or pending charges of anyone in the household 16 years of age or older, when care occurs outside the child's home.

## Where can my caregiver care for my child?

## If your caregiver is one of the following relatives, care may occur in the caregiver's home.

- Grandparent or great grandparent
- Aunt, uncle, great aunt or great uncle
- · Sibling living outside of the child's home or
- An extended tribal family member under Chapter 74.15 RCW

### All other relatives or non-relative caregivers must provide care in the child's home.

DSHS pays an hourly rate for in-home/relative care. If you bring someone into your home to care for your children, you are considered the employer and that person is your employee. As an employer, you have certain obligations. Sometimes this means you have to pay that person minimum wage and social security benefits. For more information contact:

#### The U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division at (206) 398-8039.

When you choose in-home child/relative care, you must sign Part II of the DSHS form titled "Working Connections Application," 14-417(X). This form assures DSHS that your caregiver meets the above qualifications. It is **your** responsibility to arrange safe and healthy care for your child.

### DSHS will mail you a <u>Social Services Notice</u>. The <u>Social Services Notice</u> tells you:

- Who is authorized to provide care;
- Which children services are for;
- The maximum number of hours authorized per month;

<sup>\*</sup> NOTE: Certain individuals living with a relative caregiver may also be subject to a background check, when care occurs outside the child's home.

- What rate DSHS will pay;
- What your co-payment amount is;
- How long DSHS will pay; and
- When services have been authorized, changed, or ended.

The <u>Social Services Notice</u> should come in the mail to you within one week after the DSHS paperwork is processed. Write the end date of the authorization on a calendar. This will remind you when to contact your authorizing worker for more child care services if you need them. If the <u>Social Services Notice</u> does not come in the mail, call the authorizing worker. There is a sample <u>Social Services Notice</u> on page 10 of this booklet.

### WHAT KIND OF RECORDS MUST YOU KEEP?

You need to keep records of actual hours of child care provided by the caregiver. This record could be as simple as hours noted on a calendar. The record could also be a separate listing of days and times child care was used each month. Whatever method you choose, make sure you keep these records for at least one year.

Not keeping attendance records may result in an overpayment. Public funds are used to pay for child care through DSHS. Federal and state auditors may need to review the records that support why you received benefits.



### THE SOCIAL SERVICES NOTICE

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SSPS CONTROL PO BOX 45812 OLYMPIA WA 98504

45812

SOCIAL SERVICES NOTICE 999-8-ESA

07-30-2002

734487 PANDA BEAR 123 HONEYCOMB LANE WBEARSVILLE, WA 12111

4466065-01

BEAR, PANDA

#### THIS IS TO NOTIFY YOU THAT:

- BEAR, PANDA IS REQUIRED TO PAY 025.00 PER MONTH TOWARD THE COST OF SERVICES FROM 08-01-02 THROUGH 01-31-03. GOLDIE LOCKS COLLECTS THIS AMOUNT FROM BEAR, PANDA EACH MONTH. THIS AMOUNT WILL BE DEDUCTED FROM THE PAYMENT BEFORE A WARRANT IS ISSUED.
- GOLDIE LOCKS IS AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE IN HM CC REL-CHILDS WOHE FOR BEAR, TEDDY. PAYMENT IS APPROVED FOR UP TO 230 HOURS PER HONTH OF SERVICE AT \$2.06 PER HOUR FOR A HAXIHUM OF \$473.80 PER MONTH FROM 08-01-02 THROUGH 01-31-03.
  - YOU WILL RECEIVE A SERVICE INVOICE EACH MONTH. FILL OUT THE INVOICE ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS.
  - PAYMENT OF THIS SERVICE WILL GENERATE A W-2. FICA TAXES WILL BE REFUNDED AFTER YEAR-END WHEN ANNUAL PAYMENT FOR SERVICE TO ANY ONE CLIENT IS UNDER THE YEARLY FICA LIMIT. INCOME TAX IS NOT WITHHELD.
  - SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE TAXES WILL BE WITHHELD FROM EMPLOYEE MAGES. THE STATE OF WASHINGTON PAYS THE EMPLOYER'S SHARE ON BEHALF OF BEAR, TEDDY, THE EMPLOYER.
- GOLDIE LOCKS IS AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE IN HM CC REL-CHILDS HOME FOR BEAR, BROWNIE. PAYMENT IS APPROVED FOR UP TO 135 HOURS PER HONTH OF SERVICE AT \$1.03 PER HOUR FOR A MAXIMUM OF \$139.05 PER HONTH FROM 08-01-02 THROUGH 01-31-03.
  - YOU WILL RECEIVE A SERVICE INVOICE EACH MONTH. FILL OUT THE INVOICE ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS.
  - PAYHENT OF THIS SERVICE WILL GENERATE A W-2. FICA TAXES WILL BE REFUNDED AFTER YEAR-END WHEN ANNUAL PAYHENT FOR SERVICE TO ANY ONE CLIENT IS UNDER THE YEARLY FICA LIMIT. INCOME TAX IS NOT WITHHELD.
  - SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE TAXES WILL BE WITHHELD FROM EMPLOYEE MAGES. THE STATE OF WASHINGTON PAYS THE EMPLOYER'S SHARE ON BEHALF OF BEAR, BROWNIE, THE EMPLOYER.

SEE IMPORTANT HEARING INFORMATION ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS FORM

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# How does dshs pay in-home/relative caregivers?

To be sure your child care payment comes as quickly as possible, make sure you do the following:

- Make a record of the actual hours of child care used each day. Use a calendar or other form of attendance log.
- Add up the daily hours at the end of each month. You must keep records of the hours of child care you used for one year. In case of an audit, DSHS will want to see the records you have kept.
- Fill out the invoice at the end of each month. (The invoice should arrive near the end of the month.) Remember, child care is only authorized for employment or approved activites.
- Report any address changes for you or the provider immediately. Incomplete or inaccurate address information will delay or stop payment.

It is important to find child care that is right for your family.



## How do you complete the service invoice?

You must complete the invoice correctly or child care payment will not be made. Read the instructions that come with the invoice and follow the steps below so your payment comes as quickly as possible.

- STEP 1 Check to make sure all preprinted information is correct. No changes of name or address can be made on the invoice. Call the authorizing worker if information on the invoice is not correct or if you have questions.
- STEP 2 Check your calendar or attendance record for the number of hours authorized child care was provided for your child that month.
- STEP 3 "Hour" (HR) is preprinted on the invoice under SERVICE UNIT. The printed number is the maximum number of hours of child care authorized by DSHS on this invoice. The number of hours you write in cannot be more than the pre-printed hours. Review your attendance records with your caregiver. Write in the total hours from your calendar or attendance record in the box labeled "TOTAL UNIT." Extra hours for school holidays are written in the "SCHOOL HOLIDAY CARE" boxes. Make sure you only count hours the caregiver cared for your children when you were on the job or in an approved work activity and your allowed travel time to the job, etc.
- STEP 4 If an invoice comes for a month no care was provided, write "0" in the box labeled "TOTAL UNITS". Do not leave the space blank. Call the authorizing worker immediately if your situation has changed and child care is no longer needed.
- STEP 5 Sign in the box labeled "PAYEE SIGNATURE." After the caregiver reviews the number of hours you have claimed, the caregiver signs the box labeled "PROVIDER SIGNATURE."
- STEP 6 You may either mail the original invoice back to DSHS in the envelope provided or call Invoice Express at 1-888-461-8855. Instructions for Invoice Express are on the Invoice. When you use Invoice Express to bill, do not send in the invoice. If you do, this will slow your payment. Make a note of the amount you claimed in your child care records.
- STEP 7 DSHS will mail a payment to you within 14 working days after the invoice is received. It is your responsibility to pay the in-home/relative caregiver the copayment and the entire amount you receive from DSHS. Receipts must be obtained from the caregiver every time you pay them. Keep the receipts for one year.

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CALL 1-888-461-8855 OR MAIL USING YOUR OWN STAMP PAYER NUMBER PROVIDER HUNBER

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TO SIGN UP FOR DEPENDABLE QUEST DEPOSIT, SEE INSTRUCTIONS. FOR PAYMENT ISSUES, SOCIATIONS TIMELINESS, SEE INSTRUCTIONS.



HOW TO PROCESS YOUR INVOICE

Telephone invoice Express at 1-686-601-6855 and follow the instructions (recommended).

OR

SOCIAL SERVICE PAYMENT SYSTEM (SSPS) Follow the instructions sent with this form. Attach postage stamp(s) before mailing.

BEAR PANDA 123 HONEYCOMB LANE BEARSVILLE WA 98504 0-403-0

LOCKS GOLDIE 111 FAIRYTALE LANE BEARSVILLE WA 12111

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### MORE ABOUT THE SERVICE INVOICE

#### Call the authorizing worker if:

- The invoice does not come in the mail:
- The information on the invoice is not correct; or
- You claimed the wrong amount.

CLAIMING PAYMENT FOR CHILD CARE THAT WAS NOT PROVIDED OR PROVIDED DURING AN UNAPPROVED ACTIVITY MAY RESULT IN AN OVERPAYMENT TO YOU

WHEN AN OVERPAYMENT IS ESTABLISHED, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO PAY MONEY BACK TO THE DEPARTMENT.

Each time you receive a check from DSHS for child care, the in-home/relative caregiver receives a notice called a "Warrant Remittance Advice." This notice tells the caregiver:

- When you received the payment;
- The amount the payment was for; and
- Any tax related deductions.



# WHAT IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CAREGIVER?

If you are concerned about child abuse or neglect, contact your DSHS office. They will refer you to Child Protective Services (CPS). CPS will listen to your concerns and investigate the situation if necessary. You can find the local DSHS number in the phone book. The statewide toll-free DSHS referral line is:

#### 1-800-562-5624

If you still have concerns and you do not feel the situation is safe, make other child care arrangements for your child.

<sup>\*</sup> NOTE: When a DSHS employee has reasonable cause to believe a child has suffered abuse or neglect, the employee is required by law to report the incident to Child Protective Services or law enforcement.

## WHAT ARE SOME HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES?

Please use the following checklist to examine your home or your relative's home, and your caregiver's health and safety practices. "No" answers indicate unsafe or unhealthy practices that may need attention. DSHS needs your assurance that your home or you relative's home and your child's caregiver's practices are safe and healthy for your child.

	Kitchen Safety	Yes	No
1.	Are hot liquids and hot foods placed out of your child's reach?		
2.	Are cleaning supplies stored separately from food and out of		
	your child's reach?	Щ	$\sqcup$
3.	Are vitamins and medicines stored out of your child's reach?		
4.	Does your caregiver use extra care when heating foods for and around your child? (Keep handles toward back of stove; test temperature of micro-waved food before feeding to your child; keep the child in a safe place while food is prepared.)		
5.	Are knives and other sharp objects kept out of your child's reach?		
	<b>Bathroom Safety</b>		
6.	Are electrical appliances (radio, heater, hair dryer) used in your bathroom unplugged, away from water, and out of your child's reach?		
7.	Is your child always watched by the caregiver while in the tub?		
8.	Is your home's bath water adjusted to a safe temperature for		
	a child? (between 85° and 120°F)		
	<b>Child Area Safety</b>		
9.	Are windows blocked so your child cannot fall out?		
10.	Does the child's crib mattress fit the crib snugly? Is the mattress		
	firm? (A loose-fitting mattress can cause strangulations or limb injuries. Soft mattresses are associated to SIDS.)		
11	Are crib slats 2 3/8 inches or less apart?	П	П
	Does the toy chest have either no lid or a lid that closes safely?		
	Does your caregiver understand the importance of infants		
	sleeping on their backs?		
	Safety Supplies		
14.	Is the poison control phone number sticker on or near the telephone?		
	Is Syrup of Ipecac available in case of a poisoning?		
16.	Are there safety latches or locks on cabinets and drawers that contain potentially dangerous items? (cleaning supplies, medicine, alcohol,		
	knives, matches, tools, etc.)?		
17.	Are all unused electrical outlets covered?		

	<b>General Safety</b>	Yes	No
17.	Does the home have two exits, in case of fire or other emergency?		
18.	Are electrical cords - extension and appliance cords – in safe		
	condition, not frayed or over loaded?		Ц
	Are electrical cords beyond your child's reach?		Ш
20.	Are all space heaters in safe condition, and out of your child's reach? (All space heaters should be stable, with protective covering, and away from curtains, papers, and furniture.)		
21.	Is the wood burning stove in safe condition and out of your child's reach?		
22.	Is the stove inspected each year?		
	Are plants out of your child's reach? (Some plants are poisonous.)		
	Are stairs, protective walls, railings, porches, and balconies sturdy, stable, and in good condition?		
25.	Are hall and stairway lighting adequate to prevent falls?		
	Is there loose, chipping, or peeling paint? Children can be poisoned by lead paint?		
27.	Is the outdoor play area fenced?		
28.	Are pools on the property or in the neighborhood protected from use by unsupervised children?		
29.	Is play equipment in good repair?		
	<b>Safety Practices</b>		
30.	Has a fire escape plan been developed and practiced?		
	Is your caretaker aware of the escape routes and evacuation plan?		$\Box$
	Are matches and lighters kept out of your child's reach?		
	Are purses with vitamins, medicines, cigarettes, matches, jewelry, and		
	calculators (with easy to swallow button batteries) kept out of your		
	child's reach?		Ш
34.	If there is a basement, is there a lock or other barrier that prevents the child from entering the basement?		
	<b>Health Practices</b>		
35.	Is your child's immunization schedule current?		
36.	Does your caretaker wash counters, sinks, and toilet surfaces with a disinfectant to prevent and control the spread of infectious disease?		
37.	Does your caretaker wash hands after using the bathroom, after		
	diapering, helping your child with toileting, sneezing or coughing, nose blowing, or after helping your child with hygiene?		
38.	Does your caretaker wash hands more frequently when they have a cold or the flu or any other infectious disease?		

Notes:



